

Howard County Compensation Review Commission

MINUTES (Approved)

Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Time: 6:34 p.m.

Place: CVG Conference Room, George Howard Building, Ellicott City

Commission Members in attendance:

Deeba Jafri
Teresa Johnston
Jennifer Jones
Pravin Ponnuri
Steven Sachs

Staff present:

John Gwynn, Office of Law
Jeff Meyers, County Council staff
Ali Shirazie, County audit staff

- The Minutes from September 28, 2017, were approved unanimously.
- The chairperson, Mr. Ponnuri, reviewed the Commission's activities to date.
- Mr. Sachs reported on his thinking about whether the Commission should recommend more personal staff for Council Members. He concluded that the Commission should not so recommend.
- The Commission discussed what an appropriate salary for Council Members should be and whether that salary should reflect the County's median income figure, the salaries of peer groups elsewhere, the salaries of similarly skilled other jobs in government, or the salaries of Council Special Assistants. The Commission also discussed how salary affects the likelihood of individuals choosing to run for office. The Commission considered the kind of reaction that a significant raise might cause from the public or County employees.
- The Commission reviewed information provided by Karen Knight, Special Assistant for District 5, about how the Council Members' work has changed in recent years.
- Mr. Ponnuri moved, and Ms. Jones seconded the following motion:

Council Members shall be paid \$88,000 for the first year of the next term and, for following years, that amount shall increase each year by 2.5% or the CPI-U Index, whichever is greater. The existing stipend for the Chair and the equipment allowance shall continue.

After discussion of the motion, because not all of the Commission Members were in attendance, Mr. Ponnuri moved to Table his motion, and everyone else seconded. The

motion to Table passed unanimously.

The Commission intends to deal with the Tabled motion at its next meeting when all of the Commission members are expected to attend.

- The Commission discussed the County Executive's salary proposal. Salaries of peer positions elsewhere seemed to be the most appropriate data point. Some Commission members were concerned about the magnitude of any increase in terms of percentage.

Mr. Ponnuri moved, and Ms. Jones seconded the following motion:

The County Executive shall be paid \$210,000 for the first year of the next term and, for following years, that amount shall increase each year by 2.5% or the CPI-U Index, whichever is greater.

After discussion of the motion, because not all of the Commission Members were in attendance and because the Commission had not yet interviewed the County Executive, Mr. Ponnuri moved to Table his motion, and Ms. Jones seconded. The motion to Table passed unanimously.

- The Commission determined to invite the County Executive to the next meeting to hear the Executive's thoughts about how he spends his time, the priorities of the job, the parts he likes, and the parts he dislikes. The Commission values the Executive's perspective as it seeks to learn about his typical day and week. If the Executive cannot attend, the Commission would like a written response. Mr. Meyers was directed to contact the Executive.
- The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.